

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6207

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Local Government, January 18, 2018

Title: An act relating to clarifying the authority of port districts to offer programs relating to air quality improvement equipment and fuel programs that provide emission reductions for engines, vehicles, and vessels.

Brief Description: Clarifying the authority of port districts to offer programs relating to air quality improvement equipment and fuel programs that provide emission reductions for engines, vehicles, and vessels.

Sponsors: Senators Palumbo, Short and Sheldon.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Local Government: 1/18/18, 1/18/18 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows port districts to operate programs and activities intended to reduce air pollution.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Takko, Chair; Palumbo, Vice Chair; Short, Ranking Member; Angel and Liias.

Staff: Bonnie Kim (786-7316)

Background: Port Districts. Port districts are municipal corporations with the authority to operate harbor improvements and facilities for rail, water, air, and motor vehicles. Port districts may improve its lands by dredging, filling, bulkheading, providing waterways, or otherwise developing such lands for industrial and commercial purposes.

A district may also maintain and operate a facility for the control or elimination of air, water, or other pollution, including, but not limited to, facilities for the treatment and/or disposal of industrial wastes, and may make such facilities available to others under conditions and rates

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approved by the port commission. Conditions and rates must be sufficient to reimburse the port for all costs related to providing a pollution control facility. Ports may not use tax revenue to cover costs related to providing pollution control facilities.

Pollution control facilities do not include air quality improvement equipment that provide emission reductions for engines, vehicles, or vessels.

Summary of Bill: Pollution control facility is redefined to include programs and activities that are intended to reduce air pollution from:

- vehicles used in cargo transport to, from, and within district facilities; and
- cargo vessels within the district.

Use of district funds for these programs and activities are deemed a governmental and public function, exercised for a public purpose and as a public necessity for promoting cleaner air. Statutory restrictions relating to condition, rates, and cost recovery do not apply to pollution control facilities provided as part of these programs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Some ports believe they have the legal authority to run these air pollution reduction programs already. This bill is a technical fix to clarify statutory authority. Emissions reduction is a large part of the policy work in the Senate this year. Ten years ago some ports voluntarily created the Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy to collaborate with private industry partners and collectively reduce air emissions from ships, trains, and trucks.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Guy Palumbo, Prime Sponsor; Sean Eagan, The Northwest Seaport Alliance.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.